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ANNUAL HISTORY
UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE (U)
1 JANUARY-31 DECEMBER 1961

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UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE
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1962

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CHAPTER 3

Berlin

15. The New Crisis

a. Refugee Trends. With Khrushchev making repeated threats that a Soviet-East German peace treaty would be concluded before the end of 1961, the flow of refugees leaving East Germany and East Berlin for West Berlin increased gradually during the first five months of the year. Whereas in February the number of refugees averaged about 2,650 per week, it rose to 3,300 in May. These totals included unusually large numbers of youths and students, skilled and white collar workers, private entrepreneurs, and medium-level managerial and executive personnel, whose departure created acute manpower shortages in the East zone. 4

Following the Kennedy-Khrushchev meeting in Vienna on 3-4 June, more and more East Germans left their homes to seek refuge in the West. By mid-July the exodus averaged about 1,800 persons per day, and for July as a whole it totalled 30,444—the largest flight during any month since 1953. When the figures rose to more than 3,000 a day in early-August, some communist action seemed inevitable. U

b. Closing of the East Berlin Sector Border. Without warning, the Ministry of Interior of the so-called German Democratic Republic (GDR) announced on 12 August that, effective immediately, only 13 of the then-existing 120 border crossing points would remain open for pedestrian and vehicular traffic from either the East or the West. During the night of 4

1

(1) Info extracted from files of Major J. F. Holcomb, USAREUR Intel Div Gen Coll Sec, 7 Dec 61. SCP-4. (2) Cable UNN, USPER Berlin to Sec State (101), 27 Jul 61. Both CONF.

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12-13 August the regime began exercising strict East/West Berlin sector crossing controls, and in the early morning hours of 13 August it closed the zonal border-crossing points to all East Germans.

The military phase of the border closing had begun as early as 11 August, or possibly sooner, when the East German border police assembled work details of engineers and other personnel to erect barbed wire and other obstacles along the border. These personnel began to move from assembly areas to the zonal border during the evening of 12 August, but did not arrive at crossing points until mid-day of 13 August. East German army and paramilitary units began moving into East Berlin during the early hours of that day.

At 0500 hours all houses within 2 or 3 blocks of the East German border were checked by police, and in East Berlin a large number of factories, schools, and public buildings were taken over by military units. Thirty minutes later, East German armored and motorized infantry troops began arriving at S-Bahn stations in East Berlin.

Although the Soviets remained as aloof as possible during the border seal-off—to avoid any appearance of being implicated in the activities of the East German "sovereign" regime—by 15 August three of their divisions had apparently established a ring around Berlin. A few Soviet troops, whose role seemed to be limited to supervision and back-up, were observed within the city itself.²

c. Press and Radio Comments. After the sector border had been closed to East Germans, Western press and radio commentators recommended the application of economic pressure. East Berlin papers responded with an official declaration, stating that attempts to deal with the GDR from positions of strength and to apply economic pressure were doomed to failure. The GDR, it was held, was a sovereign state, and use of its access routes would be permitted only on a treaty basis. A similar attitude characterized the Soviet reply to the U.S. Commandant's protest against GDR restrictions on freedom of travel between East and West Berlin. The Soviet position was that the GDR was a sovereign nation in whose interest

2

(1) Cables SX-4770 and 4773, CINCUSAREUR to DA for ACSI and US-CINCEUR for J-2, 13 Aug 61. (2) Cable SX-4825, same to same, undated. Both CONF. Both SCP-4. (3) Cable SX-4905, CINCUSAREUR to STD WISC DISTR, 18 Aug 61. SECRET. SCP-3. (4) Cable SX-4827, CINCUSAREUR Intel to STD DLY ISUM cable distr, 15 Aug 61. SECRET. SCP-1.

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affairs the Soviet Government would not interfere.³

d. Increasing Tension. To close routes of escape, the GDR strengthened its border patrols and constructed masonry walls and barbed wire fences. U.S. and French forces intensified active patrolling in the eastern sector of Berlin without encountering interference. In general, however, GDR control of border crossing points proved effective, since within 48 hours it reduced the refugee flow to approximately 200 per day.⁴

Having witnessed the dramatic actions taken by the GDR on 13 August, the leaders and population of West Berlin expected that the Western Allies would take tangible counteraction. West Berlin's Mayor Willy Brandt voiced this expectation in public speeches, to large crowds, in which he denounced the restrictions imposed by the GDR as illegal. ⁴

⁴
(1) Cable SX-4803, CINCUSAREUR to DA for ACSI and USCINCEUR for J-2, 15 Aug 61. CONF. SCP-3. (2) Cable UNN, USBER to Sec State and AMEMB Bonn, 17 Aug 61. (SMC IN 6396). SECRET.

⁵
(1) Cable UNN, USBER to Sec State, 16 Aug 61. (2) Cable SX-4857, CINCUSAREUR to DA for ACSI, and USCINCEUR for J-2, 17 Aug 61. SCP-3. Both CONF.

⁶
Cable JCS-1185, JCS sgd LEMNITZER to USCINCEUR for NORSTAD, 19 Aug 61. TS. SCP-3.

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concerning the move until it was announced by the Department of Defense.⁷

U b. Preparations and Instructions. Upon receipt of the instructions, CINCUSAREUR alerted Seventh Army to prepare the 1st Battle Group, 18th Infantry, 8th Infantry Division, reinforced by one towed 105-mm howitzer battery and one combat engineer company, for movement to Berlin. The move was to be by administrative motor convoy via the Helmstedt-Berlin Autobahn with departure from the Helmstedt check point on Sunday morning, 20 August and arrival at Berlin in the afternoon of the same day. Upon closing at the Helmstedt check point, the battle group would be detached from Seventh Army and attached to Berlin Command.

U The movement through the East Zone of Germany was to conform to U.S. Soviet agreements covering such moves, and no extended halts were to be made in the Soviet Zone. Proper documentation was to be the responsibility of USCOB. The units were to leave from Helmstedt with full fuel tanks and sufficient POL reserves to cover the entire movement. Personnel would move in combat uniform, at maximum present-for-duty strength and with weapons and equipment, less tracked vehicles. Basic loads would be carried, but no atomic weapons. Ammunition would be carried, but it would be boxed and not distributed to individuals or weapons. The battle group was to be prepared for an extended stay in Berlin, in garrison status.⁸

U Shortly after midnight on 19 August, General Clarke informed USCINCEUR of the unit's designation and the estimated times of its departure and arrival.⁹ At the same time he amplified his instructions to the task force commander, pointing out that the objective of augmenting the Berlin garrison by a reinforced U.S. Army battle group was to demonstrate the United States' attitude in the Berlin situation, not to probe Soviet intentions. However, the U.S. force would have to be prepared to react if the East Germans or Soviets harassed or opposed its movement. CINCUSAREUR therefore prescribed counteractions for each of the four types of resistance that might be encountered.

U If extreme administrative resistance--such as excessive time taken to check vehicles and count personnel--was encountered, the task force

7

(1) Cable JCS-1168, JCS to USCINCEUR, 18 Aug 61. (2) Cable SX-4908, CINCUSAREUR to USCINCEUR, 19 Aug 61. Both TS. Both SCP-3.

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Cable SX-4907, CINCUSAREUR sgd CLARKE to Seventh Army and USCOB, 18 Aug 61. TS. SCP-1.

9

Cable SX-4908, CINCUSAREUR to USCINCEUR, 19 Aug 61. TS. SCP-3.

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commander would ask the Soviet or East German personnel to accelerate procedures. He would also report all incidents immediately.

If the documentation presented at the check point was not honored and the Soviet or East German authorities refused to permit passage of the convoy--without offering resistance by force--the battle group commander would give them a verbal warning, with a one-hour deadline. If passage was refused again at the end of one hour, he would direct his force to remove or crash the barrier blocking the Autobahn. If no additional resistance was offered, the battle group would proceed toward Berlin.

If undefended or passive obstacles were placed in the way of the column, the obstacles would be removed and the convoy would continue its march. If lightly defended obstacles or harassing fire were met, the column would take appropriate action and attempt to proceed. The appropriate defensive action in such a situation would consist of dismounting on or immediately adjacent to the Autobahn, issuing small arms ammunition, hand grenades, and rifle grenades, and maneuvering along and immediately adjacent to the Autobahn. If the task force was unable to eliminate resistance and to proceed, it would take up defensive positions in the immediate vicinity of the Autobahn and request further instructions.

Finally, if the task force was opposed by superior military forces, the column would halt, defend itself as necessary, and attempt to remain in place, reporting the situation to higher authority. If the commander considered that there was danger of being cut off or losing his forces by military action, he would be authorized to disengage and withdraw. On order of USCINCEUR, the U.S. air elements would provide air cover and close support, using conventional weapons.

In any situation other than those covered by these instructions, the task force commander was to halt, report, and request further orders. In any event, the progress of the column until it reached Berlin was to be reported at least once an hour.

Before the move was initiated, ammunition was to be placed in each vehicle under the close control of a non-commissioned officer. It would be prepared for issue on the direction of the task force commander only.

c. Execution of the Move. At 0500 hours on 19 August, the reinforced battle group departed from Mannheim en route to the bivouac area

10

Cable SX-4945, CINCUSAREUR to USCOB & USAREUR LO Helmstedt, 19 Aug 61. TS. SCP-3.

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near the Helmstedt check point. By 2230 hours all the units of the convoy had reached the bivouac area without accidents or delays.¹¹

Berlin Command assumed command of the task force at 0130 hours on 20 August. At 0400 hours the forward Air Control Team (ACT) joined the column. The first march serial moved to the U.S. check point at Helmstedt at 0527 hours, and by 1255 all march units had cleared it. Passage through the Soviet check point was accomplished without incidents, and all march serials proceeded toward their destination.

While en route to Berlin, observers noted that East German policemen were stationed about 250 yards apart on both sides of the Autobahn, probably to keep East German civilians from observing the convoy, as well as to prevent incidents.¹² The column was buzzed by a Soviet twin-engine jet plane. After a few moments, however, the plane departed and was not seen again. The rest of the trip was uneventful.

The first march unit reached the U.S. check point in West Berlin at 1130 hours and the last unit at 1919 hours. The convoy received a tremendous welcome from the population and was greeted by the Vice President of the United States, the Honorable L. B. Johnson. All immediate objectives in reinforcing the U.S. garrison in Berlin had been achieved.¹³

17. Reasserting U.S. Rights on the Autobahn

a. Patrols. On 21 September two U.S. Army enlisted men traveling on the Berlin-Helmstedt Autobahn were stopped by East German police, taken into custody, and confined to prison cells at Potsdam. Thereupon, to assist U.S. travelers and to guarantee that U.S. access rights for highway travel were not violated, Berlin Command decided that patrols moving up and down the Autobahn would perform 6 round trips per day for the next 4 days. It was intended that the frequency of the trips would be reduced to three per day, commencing on 26 September.¹⁴

¹¹ (1) Cable SX-4938, CINCUSAREUR to OSDPA 19 Aug 61. SCP-4. (2) Info from USAREUR Ops Center Log, 19 Aug 61. Both SECRET. No regrading data.

¹² (1) Cable AETVGT-O-X358, V Corps to Seventh Army, 20 Aug 61. (2) Info from USAREUR Ops Center Log, 20 Aug 61. Both SECRET. No regrading data.

¹³ (1) Info from USAREUR Ops Center Log, 20 Aug 61. SECRET. No regrading data. (2) U.S. Army, Berlin Hist Rept 1961, pp. 56-57. SECRET. SCP-1.

¹⁴ (1) Cable UNN, USBER to Sec State, 22 Sep 61. (2) Cable D-239, Berlin Cmd to CINCUSAREUR, same date. SCP-4. Both CONF.

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On 24 September the Soviets protested the patrolling as a violation of the agreement pertaining to "communications controls"—an apparent reference to controls over communication routes between the Federal Republic and West Berlin. In refutation of their protest, the Soviets were informed that maintenance of assistance patrols on the Autobahn was a normal U.S. activity that had been carried out for the past two years at the rate of two or three patrols per week.¹⁵ Moreover, when another detention of U.S. personnel traveling on the Autobahn occurred on the afternoon of 25 September, Berlin Command decided to continue patrolling at the rate of six round trips per day on 26 September and thereafter.¹⁶ 4

Apparently the patrolling, more than any other act, proved the U.S. determination with respect to Berlin. In early October, three of the senior and most respected churchmen of Berlin informed General L. D. Clay¹⁷ 4 that the greatest encouragement they had received since 13 August came from the increase in the frequency of U.S. assistance vehicles on the Autobahn.¹⁸

After having probed U.S. intentions on the Autobahn, the East Germans switched to interference with U.S. military trains during October. Although superficially erratic, these incidents possibly had enough common ingredients to form a rudimentary pattern of East German cockiness and 4

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Cable D-244, Berlin Command to CINCUSAREUR, 25 Sep 61. CONF. SCP-4.

18

Cable COB-435, USCOB to CINCUSAREUR, 6 Oct 61. CONF. SCP-4.

19

Cable UNN, AMEMB Bonn to Sec State, 11 Oct 61. CONF.

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4 b. Interchange of Infantry Companies. In November the temporary interchange of infantry companies was initiated as a means of increasing the movement of armed U.S. convoys on the Autobahn. Individual motorized infantry companies of Berlin Command moved to a training area near Hildesheim in the British zone of responsibility, within one day's road march of Berlin. There they trained for two days and then returned to Berlin. The departure of each company from Berlin was preceded by the arrival of a Seventh Army infantry company that replaced the Berlin unit during its absence.²² Under the guise of routine training activities, the new procedure was instrumental in manifesting the U.S. right to use the Helmstedt-Berlin Autobahn in both directions. However, whereas several Berlin Command companies moved to Hildesheim, only two Seventh Army companies were actually sent to replace them.²³

4 There was another aspect to this type of operation. On 5 December as many as 10 Soviet officers, including one general and one colonel, as

20

Cable UNN, AMEMB Bonn sgd DOWLING to Sec State (1050), 1 Nov 61. TS.

21

Cable UNN, USBER Berlin from CLAY to AMEMB Bonn and Sec State, 1 Nov 61. TS.

22

(1) Cable SX-6990, CINCUSAREUR to Seventh Army & USCOB, 1 Nov 61. SCP-1. (2) Cable D-343, Berlin Comd to CINCUSAREUR, 4 Nov 61. SCP-4. (3) Cable SX-6833, CINCUSAREUR to distr, 8 Nov 61. SCP-4. All SECRET.

23

(1) Cable D-374, Berlin Comd to CINCUSAREUR, 16 Nov 61. (2) Cable SA-7029, CINCUSAREUR to distr, 18 Nov 61. (3) Intvws, Mr. G.E. Blau, USAREUR Hist Sec, with Major N.T. Stanfield, Ops Div Trp Ops Br, 12 Dec 61 and 29 Jan 62. All SECRET. SCP-4.

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well as many East German officers and customs officials, observed the processing of the U.S. company at check points that had to be passed upon entering East German territory. The Soviets undoubtedly used this opportunity to collect intelligence information, whereas the East German personnel were probably interested in learning the control procedures and in demonstrating GDR sovereignty by their presence.²⁴

c. Movements of Berlin Brigade Infantry Companies. Four days later General Watson therefore proposed that the training of Berlin infantry companies near Hildesheim be resumed on 17 December, one day after the completion of the rotation of the Berlin augmentation battle group. Two company-size movements, covering the periods 17-23 and 26-30 December respectively, were contemplated. Since General Clarke considered the temporary reduction in the strength of the Berlin garrison by one infantry company as militarily and psychologically insignificant, no interchange with Seventh Army units was planned for these two movements.²⁶

The two companies executed their movements without incident.²⁷ The East Berlin press, however, featured a note to the U.S. Government in which the GDR asserted its "unlimited supreme power over communication routes that crossed its territory" and protested against the "illegal provocative troop movements of American NATO units."²⁸ Two days later

24

Cable SX-7376, CINCUSAREUR from Intel to Std Dly ISUM cable distr, 6 Dec 61. SECRET (info used CONF). SCP-1.

25

Cable ECJGJ-9-98024, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, 6 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP-3.

26

(1) Cable D-450, USCOB/CG USAB from AEBGC to CINCUSAREUR, 15 Dec 61. (2) Cable SX-7615, CINCUSAREUR to USCOB/USAB, 17 Dec 61. (3) Cable D-460, USCOB/USAB from AEBGC to CINCUSAREUR, 21 Dec 61. Special handling required; not releasable to foreign nationals. All SECRET. SCP-4.

27

Cables D-462, 463, 466, 468, and 473, USCOB/USAB to USCINCEUR, USAREUR, 23, 24, 26, 27, and 30 Dec 61. FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.

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Cable UNN, USBER sgd LIGHTNER to Sec State (1208); AMEMB Bonn (1072), 18 Dec 61. UNCLAS.

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two West German newspapers reported that if U.S. convoy movements continued, the GDR would respond in the immediate future by halting all civil traffic on the Autobahn for the entire period of convoy transit.²⁹ Be-

u Planning for convoy movements on the Autobahn during the first quarter of 1962 had meanwhile been initiated.³² The schedule submitted by General Watson called for one company to move out of Berlin and back each week. Platoon-size increments would travel about 3 out of every 4 days. No more than one company would be absent from Berlin at any time, and no interchanges with Seventh Army companies were planned, except for the possible rotation of the augmentation battle group. Pending review of the full schedule, General Clarke approved the proposed actions for the period 2-6 January 1962. He considered the movement of one company, spread over six days, to be both supportable and justifiable.³³

29

Cable 249, AMEMB Bonn sgd DOWLING to Sec State (1460), 20 Dec 61. CONF.

30

Cable UNN, AMEMB Paris to Dept (3177), 21 Dec 61. CONF.

31

Cable 254, AMEMB Bonn sgd DOWLING to Sec State (1475), 21 Dec 61. SECRET.

32

(1) Cable SX-6715, CINCUSAREUR sgd Gen CLARKE to USCOB/USAB for WATSON, 17 Dec 61. (2) Cable ECJCO-9-98667, USCINCEUR to JCS, 18 Dec 61. Both SECRET. SCP-4.

33

(1) Cable D-472, USCOB CG USAB fr AFBA-CG USBER/POLAD to CINCUSAREUR, 30 Dec 61. SECRET. (2) Cable SX-7863, CINCUSAREUR to USCOB/USAB, same date. CONF. (3) Cable SX-7864, CINCUSAREUR sgd CLARKE to USCINCEUR for PALMER, same date. SECRET. ALL SCP-4.

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d. Identification Procedures.

(1) At Check Points. After several State Department cables on the subject, on 15 September USCOB reviewed the procedures to be followed if East Germans replaced Soviet officials in the control of U.S. military rail and motor movements between West Germany and West Berlin. He pointed out that since current USAREUR plans implied acceptance of East German control of documentation,³⁴ the exercise of that control might lead to delays at the border and to the loss of preferential status by the U.S. forces. Moreover, if the East Germans imposed inspections of rail and convoy movements, they might gain insight into military plans.³⁵ 4

USAREUR considered these criticisms to be valid and realistic. However, the procedures referred to by USCOB had received quadripartite approval as recently as 30 August 1961, in a paper that outlined actions to be taken by the Allies if East Germans replaced Soviet personnel at check points. Since the quadripartite paper seemed to represent the current Allied position, USAREUR recommended that USCOB's views be submitted to the Joint Chiefs of Staff as a possible military basis for reconsideration.³⁶ 4

In December USAREUR reviewed and revised the instructions for implementing the quadripartite paper. Procedures to be followed remained unchanged but eliminated the distinction between East Germans acting as agents for the Soviets or as direct representatives of the East German regime. In any event, USAREUR would not accept any new controls exercised by the East Germans.³⁷ 4

³⁴ (1) Ltr, USAREUR to USCOB, 4 Mar 60, subj: Identification and Checkpoint Procedures for Surface Access to Berlin (U). AEAGC-OP-250/17.
(2) Ltr, USAREUR to distr, 15 Aug 60, same subj. AEAGC-OP. Both SECRET.

³⁵ Cable COB-414, USCOB to CINCUSAREUR, 15 Sep 61. SECRET. SCP-3.

³⁶ Cable SX-5699, CINCUSAREUR to USCINCEUR, 18 Sep 61. SECRET. SCP-3.

³⁷ Intvws, Mr. Blau with Major Stanfield, 12 Dec 61 and 29 Jan 62. SECRET. SCP-4.

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While General Watson concurred in the substance of the proposal, he felt that the proper timing of its implementation was an important issue. Since the U.S. movements on the Autobahn were currently under propaganda attack, he recommended that the new policy not be instituted immediately, but that a quadripartite agreement be drawn up with the understanding that the decision regarding its implementation be made at a later date.³⁹

In his comments, General Clarke stated that from a purely military point of view the impact of implementing the proposed agreement would be insignificant. The decision, however, should be based on political considerations. In this connection, he noted that current U.S., British, and French procedures differed, principally in the fact that the British had already authorized the proposed procedure. Another consideration was that, while current U.S. practice had resulted in some harassment at the hands of the East German police, no undue hardship had been caused. Moreover, and even though it might be interpreted as a sign of weakness, acceding to the East German regime in this matter, under pressure, at some later date would be preferable to doing so currently, when it might encourage further demands by the East Germans while the Soviets were still in control of Autobahn traffic.

General Clarke also pointed out that USAREUR headquarters was in the process of revising instructions that would apply if the East Germans assumed control of the check points. These contingency instructions were based on previously-reached quadripartite agreements and provided for showing orders and identification papers to the East Germans, at the check points if East Germans replaced Soviets. However, so long as current policies applied, it would seem inconsistent to authorize personnel to show orders and identification papers while traversing the Autobahn, but refuse to do so at the check points; and to accede to East German demands for identification along the Autobahn might hasten the turn-over of the check points.

In summarizing, General Clarke emphasized that the policies to be applied should be uniform. While he did not object to the proposed agreement from a military viewpoint, he felt that it should be implemented only if the East Germans took over the Autobahn check points and if

38

Cable ECJCJ-9-98176, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, 9 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP-3.

39

Cable COB-493, USA Berlin from WATSON to CINCUSAREUR for CLARKE, 11 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP-3.

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the agreed-upon procedures for that contingency were implemented.⁴⁰

18. The Rotation of the Berlin Augmentation Battle Group

a. Preliminary Planning. Within a few days after the completion of the administrative move of the 1st Battle Group, 18th Infantry, to Berlin, USAREUR drafted EP-114--an emergency plan for rotating the newly-arrived unit.⁴² When General C.D. Palmer, Deputy USCINCEUR, visited Heidelberg on 28 August, he proposed consideration of rotating the group by air and leaving its equipment in Berlin. USAREUR thereupon developed cost figures for implementing this proposal and a comparison with the cost of making the movement by rail.⁴³ Berlin Command, in its comments on EP 114, recommended that the rotation of battle groups be conducted at no shorter than 3-month intervals, because the time, money, and effort required to absorb a reinforcing group into the command facilities and current plans would make more frequent rotation impractical.⁴⁴ u

On 20 September USCINCEUR submitted the plan for rotating the battle group to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. On the assumption that the political u

40

Cable SX-7482, CINCUSAREUR from CLARKE to USCINCEUR for PALMER, 11 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP-4.

41

Cable ECJCO-9-98638, USCINCEUR sgd NORSTAD to JCS for LEMNITZER, 18 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP-3.

42

Ltr, CINCUSAREUR to CG, Seventh Army, 26 Aug 61, subj: USAREUR EP 114 (U). AEAGC-XA. CONF. SCP-4.

43

Memo, USAREUR Ops Div Exec Off to C/Trp Ops Br, 30 Aug 61, subj: Berlin Battle Group Rotation Plan. AEAGC-XA. UNCLAS.

44

Cable AEBGC-D-182, Berlin Command to CINCUSAREUR, 30 Aug 61. SECRET. SCP-4.

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U situation would require the continued augmentation of the Berlin Garrison by one reinforced battle group for an indefinite period, the planners proposed that reinforced Seventh Army battle groups be rotated into and out of Berlin at 2- or 3-month intervals. The two objectives of this periodic rotation would be to maintain the training status of the augmentation troops without having to send them out of Berlin for training, and to forestall morale problems that might arise from longer family separations. The rotating units would move by administrative motor convoy along the Helmstedt-Berlin Autobahn, with all equipment except tracked vehicles. Normally the relieved battle group would leave Berlin on one day and the relieving groups would arrive on the next; but if necessary, the relieving force would be moved in first.⁴⁵ Another method of rotation presented for consideration was phased relief by separate tactical elements. This procedure was believed to be feasible if a period of four days was allowed for it. However, completion of the exchange in two days--as previously planned--would result in less psychological buildup than would a prolonged rotation period.⁴⁶

U On 24 September the question of rotating the battle groups was discussed by Ambassador W. C. Dowling, General L. D. Clay (Ret), General B. C. Clarke, and Major General A. Watson (USCOB), at a conference in Berlin. All agreed that rotation was desirable and that for tactical and administrative reasons the exchange of entire units would be far more effective than the phased relief of separate tactical elements over a period of several days.⁴⁷

The U.S. Commander, Berlin, in turn, stressed the need for providing liaison teams and a troop orientation program before the relieving battle group moved to its new station.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Cable ECJGJ-9-93572, USCINCEUR to JCS, 20 Sep 61. SECRET. SCP-4.

⁴⁶ Cable ECJGJ-9-93836, same to same, 23 Sep 61. SECRET. SCP-4.

⁴⁷ (1) Cable SX-5854, CINCUSAREUR to USCINCEUR, 25 Sep 61. (2) Cable ECJGJ-9-93887, USCINCEUR to JCS, same date. Both SECRET. SCP-4.

⁴⁸ Cable 132, AMEMB Bonn to Sec State, 9 Oct 61. SECRET.

⁴⁹ Cable COB-464, USCOB to CINCUSAREUR, 25 Oct 61. SECRET. SCP-4.

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b. Approval of the Basic Plan. On 15 November the Joint Chiefs of Staff concurred in the rotation plan, provided that not more than three battle groups were in Berlin at one time. Public announcement should stress that the rotation was a routine operation required for training, morale, and other reasons. The movements would be carried out on the Autobahn and would thus constitute normal manifestations of the U.S. right of free access to Berlin.⁵⁰

CINCUSAREUR's recommendation that the rotation of battle groups be accomplished by small increments, starting not later than 5 December and ending before the 20th of that month, was approved by General Norstad.

c. Planning for Implementation.

(1) Timing. Based on the authority thus granted by USCINCEUR, CINCUSAREUR ordered the relief of the reinforced 1st Battle Group, 18th Infantry, 8th Infantry Division, by the reinforced 1st Battle Group, 19th Infantry, 24th Infantry Division, during 8-17 December. The time was subsequently moved forward by one day.⁵²

The movement of the 19th Infantry battle group to Berlin was to be so phased that one company or battery was to close at Helmstedt each day, beginning on 6 December, and to depart from Helmstedt the next day. The relieving force was to be issued sufficient transportation to be fully motorized during its tour in Berlin. The battle group would be preceded by a liaison party and an advance party that would make preparations for its arrival in Berlin. The movement of the 18th Infantry battle group in the opposite direction was to be on the same scale, with one company

50

Cable JCS-2186, JCS to USCINCEUR, 15 Nov 61. SECRET. SCP-4.

51

(1) Cable SX-7043, CINCUSAREUR to USCINCEUR, 19 Nov 61. (2) Cable ECJCJ-9-96181, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, 21 Nov 61. Both SCP-4. (3) Cable ECJCJ-9-97266, same to same, 22 Nov 61. SCP-3. (4) Cable ECJCO-9-97286, USCINCEUR to JCS, same date. (5) Cable ECJCO-9-97287, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, same date. Both SCP-4. All SECRET.

52

(1) Cable SX-7102, CINCUSAREUR to DA, et al., 22 Nov 61. (2) Cable SX-7135, CINCUSAREUR to distr, 24 Nov 61. (3) Fact Sheet, USAREUR Ops Div, subj: Rotation of Battle Group, 2 Dec 61. (4) Cable SX-7159, CINCUSAREUR to distr, 25 Nov 61. All SECRET. SCP-4.

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or battery departing Berlin each day, commencing 8 December. Transfer of operational control between Seventh Army and USCOB was to occur upon the closing of units at Helmstedt. The movements between Helmstedt and home stations would be by administrative convoy, those between Helmstedt and Berlin would be by tactical convoy. Force might be used only to the minimum extent needed for self-protection; it would not be used to pass a check point or barrier. Unusual delays would be reported immediately. Movements would be made during daylight hours insofar as practicable, and would be completed by 15 December.⁵³

(2) Promptness in the Transmission of Important Information.

The existing USAREUR system of transmitting important information complied with all current requirements of promptness and flexibility. Since USCOB would come under USEUCOM's direct operational control in the event of an emergency, General Clarke recommended that current transmission procedures be left unchanged.⁵⁵

d. Execution of the Battle Group Rotation. The rotation plan was implemented without difficulties or incidents. The movements were completed on 16 December.⁵⁶

53

(1) Cable SX-7135, CINCUSAREUR to distr, 24 Nov 61. (2) Cable ECJCO-9-9743, USCINCEUR to JCS, 25 Nov 61. (3) Cable D-390A, Berlin Comd to CINCUSAREUR, et al., 25 Nov 61. All SECRET. SCP-4.

54

(1) Cable ECCS-9-95531, USCINCEUR from PALMER to CINCUSAREUR for CLARKE, 23 Oct 61. SCP-3. (2) Cable ECDC-9-97912, same to same, 5 Dec 61. SCP-4. Both SECRET.

55

Cable SX-7370, CINCUSAREUR sgd CLARKE to USCINCEUR for PALMER, 6 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP-4.

56

(1) Cable USCOB/CG USAB to USCINCEUR; CINCUSAREUR, 15 Dec 61. EFTO UNCLAS. (2) Intvw, Mr. Blau with Col A. J. Kehe, USAREUR Ops Div P&R Br, 14 Dec 61. UNCLAS.

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19. The Sector Border

a. Patrolling. On 9 September USCOB was instructed to take every precaution to avoid situations that might involve U.S. troops unnecessarily in incidents along the West Berlin-East Berlin sector border. One way to do this would be to make maximum use of West Berlin police at the border. 4

Initially, U.S. patrols were instructed to operate no closer than 25 yards to the border. On 26 September patrolling was curtailed. Thereafter the only U.S. force remaining on the border was a military police detachment of 1 officer and 5 men at the Friedrichstrasse access point, through which all Allied traffic to East Berlin had to pass, supplemented by random sector border patrols. Other sector border duties were performed by West Berlin police. 57 4

b. Weapons and Ammunition for the West Berlin Police Force. When

In reply to an inquiry on this subject, USCOB submitted a list of weapons and items of transportation and communications equipment that the police desired. Except for the issuance of 6,843 M1 rifles and bayonets, these requirements had not been discussed with the British and French in Berlin. 59 4

USAREUR recommended that the West Berlin police be provided with additional M1 rifles and some rifle grenade launchers. However, since the need for some of the other equipment seemed doubtful, USAREUR returned the list to USCOB, asking for reevaluation and tripartite consideration of the essentiality of each item. 60 4 USCINCEUR was anxious to help

57

(1) Cable SX-5495, CINCUSAREUR to USCOB, 9 Sep 61. SCP-4. (2) Cable SX-5704, CINCUSAREUR to USCINCEUR, 18 Sep 61. SCP-3. (3) Cable AEBGC-D-247, Berlin Comd to CINCUSAREUR, 26 Sep 61. SCP-4. (4) U.S. Army, Berlin Hist Rept 1961, pp. 58-59. SCP-1. All SECRET.

58

(1) Cable JCS-1511, JCS to USCINCEUR, 14 Sep 61. (2) Cable ECJGJ-9-93290, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, 15 Sep 61. SCP-3. Both SECRET. (3) U.S. Army, Berlin Hist Rept 1961, pp. 77-79. SECRET(info used OFLUSE).

59

Cable COB-415, USCOB to CINCUSAREUR, 16 Sep 61. SECRET. SCP-3.

60

(1) Cable SX-5704, CINCUSAREUR to USCINCEUR, 18 Sep 61. (2) Cable SX-5705, CINCUSAREUR to USCOB, same date. SCP-3. Both SECRET.

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the police wherever possible. Making a "field army" out of them was not intended, but improving their capabilities to perform their assigned missions was highly desirable. Moreover, the Berlin authorities might be willing to pay for the equipment.⁶¹

V A few days later, at the request of the Allied Staff in Berlin, the issuance of supplementary items of equipment was recommended. Approximately 40 percent of these items were available in Berlin; the remainder would have to be shipped from COMZ stocks. The issuance began on 16 October.⁶³

U Berlin Command had meanwhile submitted another request for the loan to the West Berlin police of some M1 and M2 carbines, spare parts, and ammunition that had become excess to its needs as a result of the recent issue of M14 rifles. The carbine was considered to be ideally suited for use along the border. This request was supported by Mayor Willy Brandt,

U In supporting the request, General Clarke warned that any border crossing incident might result in an exchange of fire that would lower the dignity of elite U.S. troops by involving them with East German police. If communist military forces then intervened, a police incident might assume the dimensions of an international conflict. To avoid such a contingency, he held, the West Berlin police should be made responsible for the sector border and should be issued the appropriate weapons, ammuni-

61

Cable SX-5729, CINCUSAREUR to USCOB, 19 Sep 61. SECRET. SCP-3.

62

(1) Cable JCS-1652, JCS to USCINCEUR, 26 Sep 61. (2) Cable ECJCJ-9-94171, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, 29 Sep 61. SCP-3. Both SECRET.

63

(1) Cable SX-6171, CINCUSAREUR to DA, 7 Oct 61. SECRET. (2) Cable SX-6400, CINCUSAREUR to USCINCEUR, 19 Oct 61. TS. Both SCP-4.

64

(1) Cable D-277, Berlin Cmd to CINCUSAREUR, 13 Oct 61. SECRET. SCP-4. (2) Cable JCS-1866, JCS, J-3, Joint Staff sends, as quoted in Cable ECJCJ-9-101470, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, 14 Oct 61. (3) Cable COB-447, USCOB to CINCUSAREUR, 17 Oct 61. Both TS. SCP-3.

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tion, and equipment.⁶⁵ He therefore agreed that the West Berlin police should have automatic small arms of a capability comparable with that of the East Berlin police force's arms. Specifically, the outdated British Sten sub-machine guns currently used by the West German police should be replaced by carbines.⁶⁶

c. U.S. Probing of Crossing Points. In early October probes of the United States' right to use other sector crossing points than the one at Friedrichstrasse were envisaged. U.S. vehicles returning from trips to East Berlin were to attempt to return via American sector crossing points where there was little activity. If the East German police granted passage, the U.S. position that passage was a right would be strengthened. If it was denied, the U.S. personnel would ask for a Soviet officer. If the East German police refused to call a Soviet officer, the U.S. personnel would protest and eventually withdraw via the Friedrichstrasse exit.

Generals Clay and Watson, who advocated these probes, believed that this course of action could not result in a loss of prestige, would not add any risk to the present situation, and would serve to keep the other side guessing. In addition, it would increase contacts between Soviet and U.S. personnel and would help to overcome the unfavorable reactions to the United States' failure to exercise the right of free passage aggressively after the number of crossing points for Allied personnel had been reduced to one on 23 August. General Clarke, however, doubted the value of such probes and was apprehensive lest their failure would

65

Cable SX-6377, CINCUSAREUR from CLARKE to USCINCEUR for NORSTAD & PALMER, 18 Oct 61. SECRET. SCP-4.

66

Cable SX-6400, cited above. TS. SCP-4.

67

(1) Cable ECJCJ-9-101495, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, 24 Oct 61. TS. SCP-3. (2) Cable SX-6551, CINCUSAREUR to Berlin Comd, 25 Oct 61. SECRET. SCP-4.

68

Cable D-443, USA Berlin from AEBGC to CINCUSAREUR, 11 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP-1.

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lead to a loss of U.S. prestige and affect the morale of the Berliners. He discussed the matter with General Norstad, who also questioned the useful purpose of the probes. Deferring action, General Norstad asked Generals Clay and Watson to reconsider the proposal.⁶⁹

General Clay continued to hold that insistence on the U.S. right to use more than one crossing point into East Berlin was most important. To attempt to come out by a crossing point other than Friedrichstrasse would be preferable to trying to enter by another point, because no large crowds would watch. By trying and protesting, the U.S. would indicate that it had not given up its right and would continue to place the responsibility on the Soviets. He added: "We talk a lot about leaning, when all we do is lean backward. We cannot lean forward and expect to win each time, but taking the initiative is worthwhile failures. We gain prestige by trying rather than doing nothing. Anyway, since the wall, we have little prestige left."⁷⁰

General Watson supported these arguments. He held that the main purpose of the proposed action was to "lean against" the other side, to keep them guessing, to let them know that the U.S. did not accept the current situation and, by demanding the appearance of a Soviet officer, to determine whether the Soviets fully supported the East German refusal to let U.S. vehicles pass at any other point except Friedrichstrasse. In a situation like this, the adoption of a positive attitude was most important; the success of the attempt was of secondary importance.⁷¹

and on the morning of 10 October Berlin Command attempted to effect reentry into West Berlin via Sonnenallee. The attempt was unsuccessful. A Soviet officer was requested, but none appeared. After a one-hour wait, the vehicle again attempted to cross. The East German police physically denied passage. The U.S. personnel protested and then

69

(1) Cable SX-6153, CINCUSAREUR to USCOB, 6 Oct 61, SCP-4. (2) Cable UNN, AMEMB Paris to Sec State, 7 Oct 61. Both SECRET.

70

Cable COB-434, Office of General Clay to CINCUSAREUR, 7 Oct 61. SECRET. SCP-3.

71

Cable COB-437, USCOB to CINCUSAREUR, 7 Oct 61. SECRET. SCP-4.

72

(1) Cable ECDC-9-94780, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, 9 Oct 61. SECRET. SCP-4. (2) Cable SC-57878, CINCUSAREUR to USCOB, 9 Oct 61. UNCLAS.

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withdrew, via Friedrichstrasse. 73

d. Restrictions on Travel to East Berlin. In early October, East German police caused traffic stoppages at Friedrichstrasse by asking passengers in civilian clothing—traveling in privately-owned, U.S.-licensed vehicles—to identify themselves. Military and civilian personnel under U.S. Government jurisdiction had been instructed to ignore such demands, because compliance would have meant that the United States relinquished its right to uncontrolled travel for persons riding in vehicles licensed by U.S. Forces. u

a

During the following days individual East Germans continued to make often ingenious and sometimes daring escapes to West Berlin, much to the annoyance of the communist authorities. This trend was not reversed when Mr. Khrushchev announced, on 17 October, that 31 December 1961 might not be the final date for the conclusion of a Soviet-East German peace treaty. To tighten controls and prevent more escapes, the East German Ministry of Interior reasserted on 23 October that all persons in civilian clothes entering and leaving East Berlin would have to prove their identity to the border guards. 75

On the following day the U.S. Commander, Berlin, prohibited U.S. personnel in civilian clothing from entering East Berlin during the hours from 1300 to 2130. The purpose of this pause was to establish an incident-free period for the preparation of measures to be taken if the East German police insisted upon the showing of identification papers. It was planned that a U.S.-licensed private vehicle, with a driver in civilian clothes, would move up to the check point. If the driver was stopped, he would protest and demand a Soviet officer. If no officer arrived within an hour, the vehicle, escorted by three U.S. Army jeeps carrying military policemen armed with M14 rifles, would enter East Berlin and return shortly afterward. A tank-infantry task force would be stationed 500-yards in u

73

Cable COB-440, USCOB to CINCUSAREUR, 10 Oct 61. CONF. SCP-4.

74

Cable UNN, Berlin from CLAY to Dept of State (748), 13 Oct 61. SECRET.

75

(1) Cable SX-6523, CINCUSAREUR from Intel to Std Dly ISUM Cable distr, 24 Oct 61. CONF. (2) Cable SX-6452, CINCUSAREUR from Intel to Std WISC distr, 20 Oct 61. SECRET. Both SCP-1.

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the rear of the crossing point, ready to intervene if the vehicle was detained in East Berlin.⁷⁶

U Half an hour after the USCOB prohibition was lifted, two U.S. military personnel, in civilian clothes and driving a private vehicle with U.S. forces license plates, drove up to the Friedrichstrasse crossing point. When they were stopped by East German police, they refused to identify themselves. Since they were unable to proceed, they returned to West Berlin. At 1045 on 25 October, when another vehicle carrying civilians was stopped at the crossing point, it was escorted across the checkpoint by military police as planned. The escort, after covering a short distance, returned to the U.S. Zone. The civilian vehicle drove two blocks along Friedrichstrasse and likewise returned. Half an hour later, three U.S. Patton tanks rolled up to the checkpoint and parked at the border line. In the afternoon two U.S. military sightseeing busses, occupied by military personnel and dependents, were turned back by the East Germans when the occupants refused to identify themselves at the crossing point.⁷⁷

U On the afternoon of 26 October a U.S.-licensed vehicle carrying 2 officers in uniform and 1 civilian was denied entry into East Berlin. Thereupon three jeeps and military policemen formed an escort for it into the sector. The vehicle continued to travel a short distance; the escorts returned to West Berlin. Upon attempting to reenter West Berlin, the car was again stopped by East Germans. The three jeeps moved up immediately and escorted it to West Berlin. While this was taking place, two truck loads of East German police dismounted, within one or two blocks of the crossing point, to control the crowd of East Berliners who had gathered in the vicinity. On the other side of the sector border, in the vicinity of Friedrichstrasse, about 500 West Berliners watched. Traffic across the check point moved normally during the rest of the day.⁷⁸

U On the afternoon of 27 October the Soviets moved 10 tanks to the Friedrichstrasse crossing point. There they faced the U.S. tanks until the late morning of the next day. At that time the tense situation eased considerably, because both the Soviet and the U.S. tanks left the sector

76

(1) Cable COB-460, Berlin Comd to CINCUSAREUR, 25 Oct 61. (2) Cable COB-461, USCOB to CINCUSAREUR, same date. Both SECRET. SCP-4.

77

(1) Cable SX-6549, CINCUSAREUR to Std Dly ISUM cable distr, 25 Oct CONF. SCP-3. (2) U.S. Army, Berlin Hist Rept 1961, p. 61. SECRET. SCP-1.

78

Cable BIO-5809-61, USCOB to CINCUSAREUR; USCINCEUR, 26 Oct 61. CONF. SCP-4.

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border and returned to the stand-by areas near the crossing point. The withdrawal of the Soviet tanks was apparently prompted by the news that the United States would not send any further "probes" into East Berlin for the time being, but would attempt to resolve the problem on the diplomatic level.⁷⁹

On 7 November CINCUSAREUR directed that all U.S. military personnel entering East Berlin would wear uniforms, and that dependents and U.S. civilian personnel having an official relationship with any agency of the U.S. government would not travel into East Berlin at all.⁸⁰ This directive suspended, but did not relinquish, the right of civilian travel across the sector border.⁸¹

There were no further incidents involving U.S. civilians at Friedrichstrasse. The East Germans, however, built new fences and reinforced old ones in the area immediately north of the crossing point and along the sector border between Friedrichstrasse and Potsdamerplatz. It was believed that the new construction was intended to perfect the controls and to prevent pedestrians from escaping.⁸²

Beginning 3 December, the seven remaining sector crossing points were strengthened on the East Berlin side by the construction of concrete walls and lift-gate barriers. Moreover, U.S. vehicles patrolling in East Berlin were harassed by delays and the destruction of radio antennas. The East German Ministry of Interior attempted to justify these actions by stating that use of radio equipment by foreign cars in East Berlin was not authorized.⁸³

The generally quiet last week of 1961 was marred by the East German refusal to let U.S. officials enter East Berlin at the Friedrichstrasse

79

(1) Cables SX-6650 and 6753, CINCUSAREUR from Intel to Std Dly ISUM cable distr, 30 Oct and 3 Nov 61. (2) U.S. Army, Berlin Hist Rept 1961, pp. 62-63. All SECRET. SCP-1.

80

Cable SC-60453, CINCUSAREUR to distr, 7 Nov 61. UNCLAS.

81

Cable SX-7329, CINCUSAREUR from Intel to Std Dly ISUM cable distr, 4 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP-1.

82

(1) Cable SX-7228, same to same, 28 Nov 61. (2) Cable SX-7292, same to same, 1 Dec 61. Both CONF. Both SCP-1.

83

Cable SX-7432, CINCUSAREUR to Std WISC distr, 8 Dec 61. SECRET. Special handling required; not releasable to foreign nationals. SCP-1.

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4 crossing point without identifying themselves. Two civilian aides in civilian clothing--accompanying General Watson, in uniform--were refused entry, although they were riding in an official U.S.-licensed car with a uniformed driver. The U.S. officials had an appointment with the Soviet Commandant. General Watson and his party preferred to return to West Berlin rather than to submit to East German control measures. The meeting was cancelled, and the Soviet Commandant was advised that he and his political adviser would thenceforth be barred from entering the American sector of West Berlin.⁸⁴

u e. Operations Plans. The U.S. Army, Berlin, prepared two operations plans related to the sector border. The first plan--BC OPLAN 3-6--covered measures to remove the barriers and to force entrance to East Berlin at the Friedrichstrasse crossing point. When an increase in the number of East German border guards was reported on 3 December and the closing of the crossing points appeared as a distinct possibility, parts of this plan were implemented as a precautionary measure. Two days later, conditions returned to normal.⁸⁵

u The other plan--BC OPLAN 3-7--was designed for "nosing down" designated portions of the sector wall. It could be executed independently or in conjunction with the plan for the removal of the Friedrichstrasse barriers.⁸⁶

u Finally, during the holiday period from 21 December 1961 to 4 January 1962, Berlin infantry elements were maintained on a 30-minute alert status, in compliance with BC OPLAN 306. In addition, the sector border patrolling activities were increased, particularly during the hours of darkness, and operational readiness tests were conducted by the Berlin Brigade.⁸⁷

84

(1) Cable BIO-6653-61, USCOB/USAB from IO to CINCUSAREUR for DCSI; USCINCEUR for J-2, 23 Dec 61. CONF. SCP-4. (2) Cable SX-7848, CINCUSAREUR from Intel Div to Std WISC cable distr, 29 Dec 61. SECRET. Special handling required; not releasable to foreign nationals. SCP-1.

85

(1) Cable D-412, US Army Berlin to USCINCEUR for PALMER and NORSTAD, 3 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP-4. (2) Cable D-420, same to same, 5 Dec 61. EFTO UNCLAS. (3) Cable SX-7370, CINCUSAREUR sgd CLARKE to USCINCEUR for PALMER, 6 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP-4. (4) U.S. Army, Berlin Hist Rept 1961, p. 51. SECRET. SCP-1.

86

(1) DF, USAREUR DCSOPS to Cofs, 4 Dec 61, subj: Berlin Command OPLAN 3-7, AEAGC-DP. SECRET. SCP-4. (2) U.S. Army, Berlin Hist Rept 1961, p. 51. SECRET. SCP-1.

87

Cable D-458, USCOB/USAB from AEBGC to CINCUSAREUR, 20 Dec 61. CONF. SCP-4.

20. Harassment of U.S. Military Trains

a. Tentative Changes in Procedures Pertaining to Unauthorized Passengers. Following an incident that occurred toward the end of November, when a U.S. military train was stopped for more than 15-hours until an unauthorized East German passenger was turned over to the Soviet authorities, USAREUR drafted new instructions. Thereafter, every reasonable precaution was to be taken to prevent unauthorized persons from boarding U.S. military trains. A person found on a train before it entered the Soviet Zone would be ejected and turned over to the competent U.S. or West German police authorities. Unauthorized passengers of Communist Bloc nationality, found aboard a train while in transit through the Soviet Zone, would be warned that they would be turned over to the Soviet authorities if their surrender was demanded. If they insisted on staying on the train they would be placed under guard and, if they remained undiscovered, they would be handed over to the U.S. military police on arrival at Helmstedt or West Berlin. If the train was stopped and the Soviet authorities asked for their surrender, the train commander would comply with the request. However, under no circumstances would such a passenger be handed over to East German authorities, nor would he be handed over to the Soviet authorities in the absence of a request from them.⁸⁸

The implications of these procedural changes--primarily involving the question of affording the refugee an opportunity of leaving the train before its arrival at the Soviet check point--were under further discussion at the end of 1961.⁸⁹

b. Delays. During the last half of December Allied military trains arriving in West Berlin experienced increasingly frequent and lengthy delays, mostly attributable to having to wait for East German locomotives to arrive. An element of harassment was believed to exist. At the end of 1961 a number of tripartite recommendations were being prepared to remedy the situation.⁹⁰

88

Cable SX-7606, CINCUSAREUR to USCOB/USAB, 16 Dec 61. CONF.

SCP-4.

89

Cable UNN, USBER sgd LIGHTNER from CLAY to AMEMB Bonn (0126); CINCUSAREUR, 2 Jan 62. SECRET.

90

(1) Cable UNN, USBER Berlin sgd LIGHTNER to Sec State (1221), 20 Dec 61. (2) Cable USAB-001, CG USCOB/USAB to CINCUSAREUR, 1 Jan 62. SCP-4. Both CONF.

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b. Quadripartite Planning for the Event of an Uprising in East Germany or East Berlin.

(1) The Rules of Conduct. On 1 December plans for quadripartite action to be taken in the event of an uprising in East Germany or East Berlin, in the absence of military operations and a decision to intervene, were approved by representatives of the United States, Great Britain, France, and the Federal Republic of Germany. The "rules of conduct" included in the plans were to be implemented by the Allied diplomatic missions in coordination with the German authorities and Allied military authorities.

According to these rules of conduct, attempts to escape should not lead to any active intervention on East German territory. However, any refugee who gained West Berlin or West German soil should be given instant asylum and protection. It also seemed desirable that the U.S. and British forces should step up their patrolling along the interzonal boundary in order to be in a position to deal with border incidents, prevent incursions, and exercise a steadying influence on West Germans living along the border. Soviet or East German fire directed at refugees who had reached West Berlin or West German soil should be returned. The Western Allies and the Federal Republic of Germany would not tolerate hot pursuit by Soviet or East German troops and would deal with incursions by firm military action. If East German insurgents gained control of an area contiguous to the sector or interzonal boundary, Allied or West German troops would have to resist the temptation to cross the border. It would be advisable not to assist the insurgents with arms or ammunition, though they might be given food and medical supplies.

99

(1) Cable AETGC-PL-132803, Seventh Army to CINCUSAREUR, 24 Nov 61. SCP-3. (2) Intvw, Mr. Blau with Col R. E. Coffin, USAREUR Ops Div C/P&R Br, 14 Dec 61. SCP-1. Both TS.

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in their implementation.100

(3) General Watson's Comments. In reply to General Norstad's and General Clarke's request for comments,¹⁰² General Watson stated that he was not at all sure that the seizure, by East Berlin insurgents, of East Berlin areas contiguous with West Berlin would aid escape to West Berlin. In view of the current aggressive policy of the communists, insurgents might not consider West Berlin to be a particularly safe asylum. In any case, much would depend on the degree of success they achieved. In the absence of a decision to intervene, the Allies could not overtly send arms or ammunition to the insurgents.

Although the rules of conduct seemed to be based on a policy of intervention, it was not clear whether the Allies wished to see a rebellion perpetuated, or quickly crushed. The Allies might take advantage of insurgent actions to spread further unrest in East Berlin and to encourage and facilitate a mass outbreak to the West. This could be accomplished by the covert demolition of selected sections of the wall and by direct Allied military actions, during which armored vehicles would "nose down" sections of the wall. General Watson also recommended that

100

Cable JCS-2442, JCS to USCINCEUR, 2 Dec 61, subj: Western Attitude in the Event of an Uprising in East Germany or East Berlin. SECRET. SCP-1.

101

Cable 221, AMEMB Bonn sgd DOWLING to Sec State (1391); USCINCEUR (188), 9 Dec 61. SECRET.

102

(1) Cable ECJGJ-9-97951, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, 6 Dec 61. CONF. SCP-3. (2) Cable SC-62913, CINCUSAREUR to USCOB/CG USAB, 7 Dec 61. EFTO UNCLAS.

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five additional contingencies be covered in the rules of conduct. 103

(4) General Clarke's Comments. General Clarke recommended a set of instructions to implement the proposed rules of conduct concerning attempts of East Germans to escape to the West, Soviet or East German fire directed at refugees who had reached West Berlin or West German soil, hot pursuit of Soviet or East German troops into West Berlin or West Germany, and the possibility of East German insurgents gaining control of an area contiguous with the sector or zonal border. The existing level of U.S. patrolling activity along the zonal border—it exceeded similar activities of British forces in their zone—was oriented toward coping with possible combat situations and was therefore adequate to meet the conditions of civil uprisings.

On the assumption that there would be no decision to intervene, General Clarke believed that the instructions contained in the rules of conduct would cover the contingencies they were meant for and, by extension, would be applicable to such situations as a temporarily successful seizure of East Berlin or the seizure of large areas of East Germany contiguous to the Federal Republic of Germany and situated along the Autobahn. He wanted it to be understood, however, that he did not interpret the rules of conduct and the applicable instructions as a before-the-fact decision not to intervene if such incidents occurred. The rules of conduct were considered as instructions to be followed in the absence of a decision to intervene. In general, however, it was impossible to anticipate all the situations under which the various rules of conduct might be applicable. Similarly, detailed instructions that might fit all possible contingencies could not be prepared in advance. 104

(5) General Clay's Comments. General Clay commented that the situation in Berlin could not be covered in detailed instructions from Washington, Paris, and Heidelberg. The Berlin Commandant would have to be credited with sufficient intelligence to be able to consider these instructions for his guidance and not as detailed orders. He could see no point to giving advice in the face of such detailed instructions, as valuable as they might be for guidance. It should not be forgotten, however, that direct responsibility rested on the man in charge on the spot. His ability to operate should not be limited to such a degree that it would destroy his responsibility. The Berlin Commandant should be given guidance and be allowed, within that framework, to use his

103

Cable COB-495, USA Berlin fr AEBGC to CINCUSAREUR, 10 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP-1.

104

Cable SX-7500, CINCUSAREUR to USCINCEUR, 12 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP-1.

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judgment in meeting situations that might develop. General Clay added that if he was wrong, then indeed the United States would have established a new code of conduct for responsible political and military representatives in the field, where, despite modern means of communication, emergency situations could develop faster than control from distant headquarters would permit. He considered this message as the most important he had yet sent from Berlin and asked the Secretary of State to study it carefully. He felt very strongly that "we must get away from any thought that emergency problems can wait for instructions from on high."¹⁰⁵

U (6) The Possibility of Early Application. While USCINCEUR was reviewing the comments to the rules of conduct and coordinating them with the American Embassy at Bonn,¹⁰⁶ General Clarke did not exclude the possibility that they might have to be applied during the year-end holiday season. Large groups of friendly-intentioned East Berliners might brush aside the East German police and force their way into West Berlin. If any such attempts were made and were successful, the Allies would have to offer asylum and protection to the border crossers and assure that no military or police action prevented their entry into West Berlin. General Watson, who was asked to comment on this subject, replied that he and the other Allied Commandants were fully prepared to deal with such a situation.¹⁰⁷

J c. Allied Staff, Berlin. To increase common understanding of training, operational, and tactical techniques employed by British, French, and American forces stationed in Berlin, 15 officers of the Berlin Brigade were attached to the British and French forces for periods of one week, and a like number of Allied officers were hosted by the Brigade.¹⁰⁸

A Toward the end of the year, the Allied Commandants studied plans to increase the capabilities of the Allied Staff, Berlin, and to permit

105

Cable UNN, USBER Berlin sgd LIGHTNER fr CLAY to Sec State (122) for RUSK, please pass to JCS, 21 Dec 61. SECRET.

106

Cable ECJCJ-9-98646, USCINCEUR to JCS, 18 Dec 61. SECRET. SCP

107

(1) Cable SX-7755, CINCUSAREUR fr CLARKE to USCOB/USAB for WATSON, 23 Dec 61. (2) Cable COB-497, USCOB/USAB fr WATSON to CINCUSAREUR for CLARKE, 24 Dec 61. Both SECRET. SCP-3.

108

U.S. Army, Berlin Hist Rept 1961, p. 47. SECRET (info used FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY).

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its operation on a 24-hour basis. In a meeting held on 20 December they agreed that 6 additional officers and 22 enlisted men would be needed and that each of the three nations represented on the staff should contribute its proportionate share. On 27 December the proposal was submitted to Generals Norstad and Clarke for their approval.¹⁰⁹

22. The Steinstuecken Exclave

The question of access rights to the exclave of Steinstuecken became acute when the East Germans surrounded this small West Berlin island with barbed wire entanglements and police guards. In order to reduce the reaction time in the event of an incident, USAREUR proposed that USCOB be authorized to implement, at his discretion, the first two courses of action specified by Berlin Command OPLAN 3-3, without further reference to higher headquarters.¹¹⁰

In late September a U.S. military police patrol of three men was placed in Steinstuecken to operate until such time as its replacement by West Berlin police would be propitious. Immediately a few refugees began to arrive in the exclave. On 27 September the first of them were evacuated by helicopter.¹¹³ To minimize attention, the evacuation of

¹⁰⁹ Cable COB-498, USCOB/USAB to CINCUSAREUR, 27 Dec 61. SECRET.

SCP-4. ¹¹⁰ Cable SX-5370, CINCUSAREUR to USCINCEUR, 5 Sep 61. SECRET. SCP-3.

¹¹¹ JCS-1517, CJCS sgd LEMNITZER to Gen NORSTAD, 16 Sep 61, as quoted in ECJCJ-9-101212, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR; USCOB, same date. TS.

SCP-3. ¹¹² Cable SX-5869, CINCUSAREUR to USCOB, 25 Sep 61. SECRET. SCP-4.

¹¹³ Cables COB-421, 422, & 425, USCOB to CINCUSAREUR, 25, 26, & 28 Sep 61. All SECRET. All SCP-4.

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refugees was coordinated with the exchange of U.S. military police personnel and the delivery of supplies for the patrol. In October, East German laborers cleared the trees along the perimeter of the exclave, while about 60 police watched all activities in Steinstuecken closely. Even so, a few refugees succeeded in escaping to the exclave, and were evacuated by air. 114

4 At the end of the year the situation at Steinstuecken was far from satisfactory, because workmen and other categories of persons from West Berlin were refused access to the exclave and there was a constant danger of incidents. The U.S. authorities in Berlin therefore proposed approaching the Soviet Commandant and making constructive suggestions toward settling the problem amicably.

114

(1) Cable COB-428, USCOB to CINCUSAREUR, 2 Oct 61. (2) Cable COB-429, USCOB to USCINCEUR, 3 Oct 61. (3) Cable ECJCO-9-94344, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, 3 Oct 61. All SECRET. SCP-4. (4) Cable COB-438, USCOB to CINCUSAREUR, 9 Oct 61. SECRET. SCP-3. (5) Cable COB-441, same to same, 10 Oct 61. (6) Cable ECDC-9-96269, USCINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, 4 Nov 61. Both CONF. SCP-4. (7) Cable SX-6784, CINCUSAREUR to USCOB, 5 Nov 61. CONF. SCP-3.

115

(1) Cable UNN, USBER Berlin sgd LIGHTNER to Sec State (1225) et al., 21 Dec 61. (2) Cable UNN, Sec State sgd BALL to Berlin (835), 22 Dec 61. Both SECRET.

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